SUPERMARKET BUSINESS

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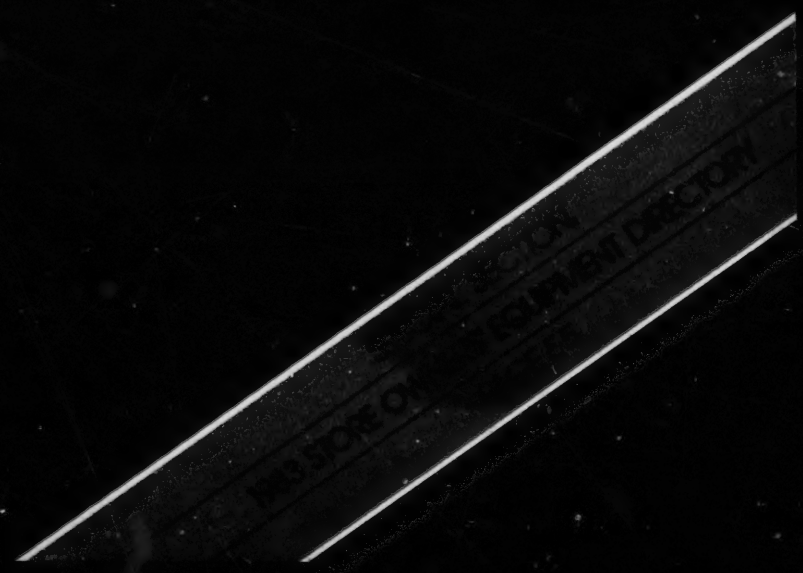
The Automated Store



PUBLISHER:
Jeffrey A. Schaeffer
EDITOR:
Kenneth P. Partch
EXECUTIVE EDITOR:
Carol Fenshott
SENIOR EDITOR:
Douglas T. Harris, Jr.
MANAGING EDITOR:
Robert J. Hughes
ASSOCIATE EDITOR:
Sarah Lum
EDITORIAL ASSISTANT:
Marianne Skoczek
CONTRIBUTING EDITORS:
Management: **Daniel J. Bartz**
Marketing: **Len Daykin**
Meat: **Kenneth Johnson, John Francis**
Merchandising: **John Pagliaro**
Produce: **Barney H. McClure**
Store Engineering: **Jay Forrester**
Store Planning: **David Rogers**
Technology: **Richard Shulman**
Training: **Donald Stowbridge**
CIRCULATION MANAGER:
Virginia Bucci
PRODUCTION MANAGER:
Daniel Coakley
DIRECTOR OF PUBLICATION RESOURCES:
Norman Bussel
RESEARCH DEPARTMENT:
Norman Bussel
(914) 528-1369

ADVERTISING SALES:
EAST:
NORTHEAST REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:
Jack Driscoll
SOUTHEAST REGIONAL SALES MANAGER:
Al Greenberger
Fieldmark Media, Inc.
25 W. 43rd Street, Suite 707
New York, N.Y. 10036
CHICAGO:
MIDWEST DIVISION SALES MANAGER:
Dave Wishard
Fieldmark Media, Inc.
3530 W. Peterson Ave.
Chicago, Ill 60659
312-583-1318
WEST COAST:
Sue Marritt
Fieldmark Media, Inc.
15910 Ventura Blvd., Suite 800
Encino, Calif. 91436
213-783-5888

CORPORATE STAFF
FIELDMARK MEDIA, INC.
25 W. 43rd Street, Suite 707
New York, N.Y. 10036
212-354-5169
PRESIDENT:
Jeffrey A. Schaeffer
ADMINISTRATIVE MANAGER:
Catherine Cahill
BUSINESS MANAGER:
Eric Braunstein
CORPORATE DIRECTOR
SALES AND MARKETING:
Thomas M. Rigney

AFFILIATED PUBLICATION:
Milling & Baking News
Sosland Publishing Co.
Kansas City, Mo.

COVER PHOTOGRAPHY:
Buddy Jenssen

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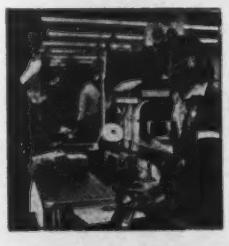
PAGE 14
THE BATTLE FOR CENTRAL CONNECTICUT WARMS UP
This area of the country typifies what's happening elsewhere in the U.S. and what kinds of supermarkets—and competition—are arising. Because superhighways make traveling 10 and 20 miles easier than ever, many trading areas are overlapping, growing larger, as stores themselves evolve into huge, powerful competitors.



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LOOKING AT AUTOMATED CASH MANAGEMENT
Electronic funds transfer systems can allow supermarket operators to automate some basic banking services and to enhance customer convenience. A lot of chains are experimenting with EFT, and most agree it's a payment system of the future.

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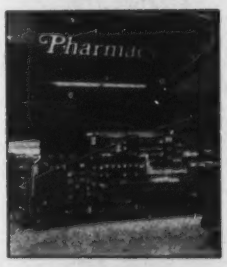
BRUNO'S FOOD & PHARMACY PERSONAL SERVICE ON A GRAND SCALE
Bruno's is betting that its suburban Birmingham, Ala., market is ready for service that is at once full-scale and intimate, in a store that integrates high-ticket specialty items throughout a full product mix—all done with style.



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NONFOODS BUSINESS: THE OUTLOOK FOR OVER-THE-COUNTER DRUGS
As more and more over-the-counter drugs are made for over-the-counter sales, and as more supermarkets enlarge their drug sections, retailers must know some of the background of this trend, and inform their customers of the medicine's uses.

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THE AUTOMATED STORE: HOW NEAR TO CLOSING THE GAP?
Small computers are being programmed to span the gaps between front- and back-end store operations—eventually. Several programs are being tested at stores, while other retailers await results before deciding when—and how—to automate their operations.

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STORE PLANNERS' 1983 EQUIPMENT DIRECTORY
Where to find what ... and who makes it.

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SAMI UPATE: HBA Growth Slows, But Continues Strong

During the four-week reporting period ending July 22, 1983, the national food store unit sales of HBA items tracked by SAMI had risen an encouraging 7.8 percent. In August, this rate of gain slowed to a 4.5 percent increase—still an impressive rise over the corresponding period a year ago.

Of the 49 HBA product categories that SAMI measures, (excluding appetite supressants, with less than a year of data available), 31 categories registered volume gains, while 18 showed declines in national unit food store movement, during the period ending August 19.

As in the preceding four-week period, there was only one product group with a loss—baby needs, where the decline amounted to – 0.8 percent, as a result of continuing weakness among baby powders (– 7.3 percent) and infant clothes (– 10.7 percent). There were increases for baby oils, creams and lotions (+ 2.7 percent) and for nursing supplies.

There were gains in most HBA product categories, although the increase was less than the preceding period. Biggest winners were in oral hygiene. So far this year, HBA sales are, on the whole, very strong.

In the previous reporting period, all eight deodorant categories showed unit volume gains. In the latest August period three deodorant categories suffered volume dips: spray deodorants (– 2.5 percent), cream deodorants (– 1.6 percent) and feminine hygiene deodorants (– 6.2 percent). But strong sales among individual products, stick deodorants in particular (+ 18.3 percent), helped the product group as a whole to advance 5.0 percent.

In the first aid product group, the 5.2 percent growth rate was the lowest since the expansion of the first aid antiseptic category, when there were many new entries among cortisone over-the-counter preparations. The latest four-week growth rate for this category was only 2.3 percent, which compares with a 52-week increase of 7.6 percent.

The hair care needs product group managed to remain in the plus column only because the high-volume shampoo category had a healthy gain of 4.8 percent.

The oral hygiene product group was still strong. The only decline was 0.1 percent for denture adhesives. Volume for the product group as a whole advanced 10.4 percent, paced by gains of 13.3 percent for toothbrushes and 12.6 percent for toothpaste and powder.

In the proprietary remedies group, there was a gain of 3.2 percent, despite unit volume losses for each of the four cold remedy categories. As of August 19, the first anniversary of the Tylenol scare was still six weeks away, so the gain was not in contrast with a year ago.

Shaving needs as a product group showed a 3.5 percent rise in unit sales. Losses were found in two small volume categories, – 11.0 percent for razors and blades and – 4.0 percent for preshave lotions.

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NonFoods BUSINESS

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Finally, skin care aids moved upward 5.2 percent, despite losses of 12.5 percent for suntan lotion, suntan oil and a modest 0.6 percent for facial preparations. On a percentage basis, lip care products, with a 26 percent advance, had the highest four-week increase of all the HBA categories that SAMI measures. This is a relatively small category, however, and even a large percentage gain does not translate to as many units as does a 9.6 percent increase for hand and body lotions and creams, for example. Cosmetic and medicated skin aids as a category increased 2.2 percent.

So far in 1983, food store sales of most high-margin health and beauty aids products have proceeded at a brisk rate. Manufacturers and retailers alike are hoping that the gains stay gains and the minuses become pluses during the remaining four SAMI periods in 1983. ■

HEALTH & BEAUTY AIDS: SAMI FOUR-WEEK FOOD STORE UNIT TRENDS VS. YEAR AGO

PRODUCT GROUP AND CATEGORY	% CHANGE VS. YEAR AGO 4 WEEKS ENDING 5/27/83	4 WEEKS ENDING 7/22/83	4 WEEKS ENDING 8/19/83
BABY NEEDS	**– 4.3%**	**– 0.4%**	**– 0.6%**
Baby Powders	–10.4	–10.2	– 7.3
Baby Oils, Creams & Lotions	– 6.7	+ 2.3	+ 2.7
Infant Clothes	– 5.3	– 8.0	–10.7
Nursing Supplies	+ 4.1	+ 6.1	+ 3.2
DEODORANTS	**+ 1.9%**	**+ 9.3%**	**+ 5.0%**
Sprays	– 0.7	+ 0.3	– 2.5
Roll-On	– 0.4	+ 8.4	+ 0.8
Stick Deodorants & Pads	+ 2.8	+24.5	+18.3
Creams	– 0.7	+ 2.5	– 1.5
Deodorants & Talcum Powders	+10.0	+ 5.6	+ 4.4
Feminine Hygiene Deodorants	± 0.0	+ 1.2	– 6.2
Foot Deodorants & Athlete's Foot Remedies	– 1.5	+ 8.0	+ 6.0
FIRST AID	**+ 9.7%**	**+ 6.0%**	**+ 8.2%**
Antiseptics	+ 7.5	+ 5.3	+ 2.3
First Aid Products	+10.3	+ 6.3	+ 6.1
HAIR CARE NEEDS	**– 0.9%**	**+ 8.0%**	**+ 0.7%**
Shampoos	+ 2.7	+10.3	+ 4.8
Hair Sprays	+ 1.0	– 0.9	– 0.7
Hair Conditioning Rinses	–11.0	– 1.7	– 9.4
Hair Setting Needs	+ 3.3	+22.0	+21.7
Home Permanent Kits	– 3.1	– 8.5	–13.1
Hair Coloring	– 3.1	– 1.2	+ 1.0
Hair Dressing Needs	+ .0	+ 4.8	+ 5.5
ORAL HYGIENE	**+ 4.9%**	**+14.3%**	**+10.4%**
Toothpastes & Powders	+ 2.7	+21.1	+12.6
Mouthwashes	+ 7.3	– 3.6	+ 1.9
Breath Fresheners	+ 9.3	+13.1	+ 7.3
Denture Cleaners	+ 6.8	+11.6	+ 8.8
Denture Adhesives	– 0.1	– 2.2	– 0.1
Toothbrushes	+15.4	+ 6.5	+13.3
PROPRIETARY REMEDIES	**+ 7.7%**	**+ 8.7%**	**+ 3.2%**
Antacids	+ 3.5	+ 5.7	+ 3.4
Internal Analgesics	+ 9.2	+12.8	+10.7
External Analgesics	+ 7.7	– 0.3	+ 3.8
Cold Tablets	+10.6	+10.6	– 4.4
Nasal Sprays—Drops—Inhalers	+ 0.2	– 0.7	– 1.7
Chest Rubs	+ 3.7	– 8.1	–11.6
Cough Remedies	+10.5	–11.3	–11.0
Laxatives	+ 8.4	+ 6.0	+ 1.6
Sleeping Aids	+ 7.0	+ 6.8	+ 4.4
Tranquilizers	–26.7	–12.3	–17.6
Vitamins	+ 4.8	+ 6.0	+ 3.4
Eye Care Products	+12.0	+16.2	+10.0
SHAVING NEEDS	**+ 1.8%**	**+ 6.5%**	**+ 3.6%**
Shaving Creams	+11.7	+17.2	+10.0
Pre-Shave Lotions	– 4.2	+ 2.5	– 4.0
After-Shave Lotions	– 3.1	– 0.4	– 9.1
Razor Blades	– 1.0	– 4.7	+ 1.2
Razors & Blades	–16.4	–10.2	–11.0
SUN CARE AIDS	**– 4.3%**	**+ 8.3%**	**+ 4.3%**
Hand & Body Creams & Lotions	–10.3	+ 5.1	+ 9.6
Facial Preparations	+10.4	– 2.1	– 0.6
Lip Care Products	+ 7.5	+12.5	+26.0
Suntan Lotions & Oils	–20.4	+14.0	+12.6
Feminine Hygiene Products	– .4	+ 3.0	+ 3.2
TOTAL ALL CATEGORIES	+ 3.4%	+ 7.8%	+ 4.3%